

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for processing prescription requests, comprising:

a pharmacy prescription processing subsystem; and

5 a central fill prescription processing subsystem coupled to said pharmacy prescription processing subsystem by a transmission medium, said pharmacy prescription processing subsystem operable to:

receive a plurality of prescription requests;

10 create a queue of prescription requests from said received plurality of prescription requests, each prescription request in said queue eligible to be filled by a central fill inventory;

15 convert said queue of prescription requests to a transmission format; and

transmit said converted queue of prescription requests to said central fill prescription processing subsystem by said transmission medium, said central fill prescription processing subsystem operable to:

20 receive said converted queue of prescription requests with said transmission format;

convert said queue of prescription requests from said transmission format to a processing format;

25 fill a plurality of prescription requests in said queue of prescription requests from said central fill inventory; and

dispense a plurality of drugs from said central fill inventory, said dispensed plurality of drugs associated with said plurality of filled prescription requests.

2. The system of Claim 1, wherein said transmission medium comprises at least one Unix Tunnel Daemon.

5 3. The system of Claim 1, wherein said transmission medium comprises at least one STP Daemon.

10 4. The system of Claim 1, wherein said transmission format comprises a packet data format.

15 5. The system of Claim 1, wherein said pharmacy prescription processing subsystem operates in a TCP/IP network.

20 6. The system of Claim 1, further comprising an IVR system for entering at least one of said plurality of prescription requests to said pharmacy prescription processing subsystem.

25 7. The system of Claim 1, further comprising:
a PDX Host system coupled to said pharmacy prescription processing subsystem; and
an NHIN system coupled to said PDX Host system and said central fill prescription processing subsystem.

30 8. The system of Claim 1, further comprising a billing subsystem coupled to said pharmacy prescription processing subsystem, said billing subsystem operable to process a claim for payment for at least one of said plurality of prescription requests.

9. A pharmacy prescription processing system,
comprising:

means for entering a prescription request; and

a processor coupled to said means for entering, said
5 processor operable to:

receive a plurality of prescription requests;

create a queue of prescription requests from said
received plurality of prescription requests, each
prescription request in said queue eligible to be filled
by a central fill inventory;
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convert said queue of prescription requests to a
transmission format; and

transmit said converted queue of prescription
requests to a central fill prescription processing
system.
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10. A central fill prescription processing system,
comprising:

a processor; and

5 a central fill inventory, said processor coupled to
said central fill inventory and operable to:

receive a queue of prescription requests in a
predetermined transmission format;

10 convert said queue of prescription requests from
said predetermined transmission format to a processing
format;

fill a plurality of prescription requests in said
queue of prescription requests from said central fill
inventory; and

15 dispense a plurality of drugs from said central fill
inventory, said dispensed plurality of drugs associated
with said plurality of filled prescription requests.

11. A pharmacy prescription processing method,
comprising the steps of:

receiving a plurality of prescription requests;

5 creating a queue of prescription requests from said
received plurality of prescription requests, each
prescription request in said queue eligible to be filled
by a central fill inventory;

converting said queue of prescription requests to a
transmission format; and

10 transmitting said converted queue of prescription
requests to a central fill prescription processing
system.

5 converting said queue of prescription requests from
said predetermined transmission format to a processing
format;

inventory; and

dispensing a plurality of drugs from said central fill inventory, said dispensed plurality of drugs associated with said plurality of filled prescription requests.

13. A method for processing prescription requests, comprising the steps of:

a pharmacy prescription processing subsystem receiving a plurality of prescription requests;

5 creating a queue of prescription requests from said received plurality of prescription requests, each prescription request in said queue eligible to be filled by a central fill inventory;

10 converting said queue of prescription requests to a transmission format;

transmitting said converted queue of prescription requests to a central fill prescription processing subsystem;

15 said central fill prescription processing subsystem receiving said converted queue of prescription requests;

converting said queue of prescription requests from said transmission format to a processing format;

20 filling a plurality of prescription requests in said queue of prescription requests from said central fill inventory; and

25 dispensing a plurality of drugs from said central fill inventory, said dispensed plurality of drugs associated with said plurality of filled prescription requests.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein said transmitting step comprises transmitting said converted queue of prescription requests with at least one Unix Tunnel Daemon.

15. The method of Claim 13, wherein said transmitting step comprises transmitting said converted queue of prescription requests with at least one STP Daemon.

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16. The method of Claim 13, wherein said transmission format comprises a packet data format.

17. The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of entering at least one of said plurality of prescription requests to said pharmacy prescription processing subsystem with an IVR system.

18. The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of processing a claim for payment for at least one of said plurality of prescription requests.

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19. A method for processing prescription requests, comprising the steps of:

entering at least one prescription request into a queue of prescription requests to be filled;

5 determining if said at least one prescription request is eligible to be filled from a central fill inventory;

if said at least one prescription request is eligible to be filled from said central fill inventory, determining if said at least one prescription request can be filled by a brand name drug from said central fill inventory;

10 if said at least one prescription request is not eligible to be filled from said central fill inventory, assigning said at least one prescription request to be filled from a local inventory;

15 if said at least one prescription request can be filled by said brand name drug from said central fill inventory, assigning said brand name drug to fill said at least one prescription request;

20 if said at least one prescription request cannot be filled by a brand name drug from said central fill inventory, determining if a second drug from said central fill inventory can be substituted for said brand name drug;

25 if said at least one prescription request can be filled by a second drug from said central fill inventory, assigning said second drug to fill said at least one prescription request;

30 if said at least one prescription request cannot be filled by a second drug from said central fill inventory,

assigning said at least one prescription request to be filled from said local inventory;

if said at least one prescription request has been assigned for filling from said central fill inventory, sending said prescription fill queue including said at least one prescription request to a dispensing system associated with said central fill inventory for filling.

20. The method of Claim 19, further comprising the step of:

if said at least one prescription request has been assigned for filling from said central fill inventory, sending billing information associated with said at least one prescription request to a payment system.

21. The method of Claim 20, further comprising the step of:

if a claim for payment associated with said at least one prescription request is not paid by said payment system within a predetermined amount of time, generating an error message to report that said claim has not been paid.

22. The method of Claim 19, wherein the step of sending said prescription fill queue including said at least one prescription request to said dispensing system associated with said central fill inventory for filling comprises conveying at least one data packet including said at least one prescription request using at least one Unix Tunnel Daemon or at least one STP Daemon.

23. The method of Claim 19, wherein said prescription fill queue comprises a plurality of prescription requests.

24. A method for processing prescription requests, comprising the steps of:

receiving a plurality of prescription requests to be filled;

5 selecting at least one prescription request from said plurality of prescription requests;

determining if a central fill inventory has adequate inventory to fill said at least one prescription request;

10 if said central fill inventory has adequate inventory to fill said at least one prescription request, allocating a dispense quantity for said at least one prescription request;

15 if said central fill inventory has inadequate inventory to fill said at least one prescription request, generating an error message to report that said central fill inventory has inadequate inventory to fill said prescription request;

20 if a dispense quantity has been allocated for said at least one prescription request, dispensing said dispense quantity from said central fill inventory.

25 25. The method of Claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

initiating an order pull for said plurality of prescription requests, said plurality including said at least one prescription request having an allocated dispense quantity;

generating at least one packing slip associated with said order pull; and

30 substantially affixing said at least one packing slip to a tote, said tote including said dispensed

quantity from said central fill inventory, and said tote destined for a predetermined store.

26. The method of Claim 24, further comprising the steps of:

initiating an order pull for said plurality of prescription requests, said plurality including said at least one prescription request having an allocated dispense quantity; and

generating a summary manifest report including a plurality of orders associated with said order pull.